

Response To Office Action Mailed April 8, 2002

A. Pending Claims

Claims 2193-2269, 5081-5090, and 5150-5198 are currently pending. Claims 2270-2308 and 5091-5100 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 5150-5198 are new.

B. Election/Restrictions

Applicant hereby elects the claims of Group I, namely claims 2193-2269 and 5081-5090 and new claims 5150-5198, drawn to a method of increasing the permeability of a coal formation, without traverse. Applicant believes that the currently pending claims (including the new claims) do not contain non-elected subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to file divisional applications capturing the subject matter of the non-elected species.

C. Election of Species

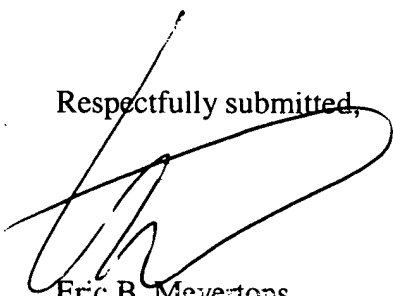
In item 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner states: "Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable." Applicant elects the species of heater described in at least claims 2199 and 2238, without traverse. The generic name of the elected species is "natural distributed combustor."

Applicant believes that the currently pending claims (including the new claims) do not contain non-elected subject matter. Applicant reserves the right for consideration of claims to additional species written in dependent form upon allowance of a generic claim.

D. Conclusion

Applicant believes that no fees are due in association with the filing of this document. If any extension of time is required, Applicant hereby requests the appropriate extension of time. If any fees are required, please charge those fees to Conley, Rose & Tayon, P.C. Deposit Account Number 50-1505/5659-06000/EBM.

Respectfully submitted,



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Marked Up Version of Amendments

Submitted with Amendment; Response to Office Action Mailed April 8, 2002

In the Specification:

On page 27, the paragraph beginning on line 3:

FIG. 95 depicts cumulative condensable hydrocarbons ~~and water~~ as a function of temperature produced by heating a coal cube.

On page 27, the three paragraphs beginning on line 19:

FIG. 106 depicts percentage ethene to ethane produced from a coal formation as a function of heating rate in ~~an experimental field~~ a laboratory test;

FIG. 107 depicts product quality of fluids produced from a coal formation as a function of heating rate in ~~an experimental field~~ a laboratory test;

FIG. 108 depicts weight percentages of various fluids produced from a coal formation for various heating rates in ~~an experimental field~~ a laboratory test;

On page 96, the paragraph beginning on line 1:

FIG. 23a illustrates a cross-sectional view of an embodiment of a centralizer ~~581e~~ 581 disposed on conductor 580. FIG. 23b illustrates a perspective view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 23a. Centralizer ~~581e-581~~ 581 may be made of any suitable electrically insulating material that may substantially withstand high voltage at high temperatures. Examples of such materials may be aluminum oxide and/or Macor. Discs 581d may maintain positions of centralizer ~~581e-581~~ 581 relative to conductor 580. Discs 581d may be metal discs welded to conductor 580. Discs 581d may be tack-welded to conductor 580. Centralizer ~~581e-581~~ 581 may substantially electrically insulate conductor 580 from conduit 582.